

An Coimisiún Pleanála

64 Marlborough Street

Dublin 1

D01 V902

Sheamus Goonan

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F26 T1H1

Date ; 26/07/2026

An Coimisiún Pleanála

64 Marlborough Street

Dublin 1

D01 V902

Re: Observation on the Proposed Muingmore Wind Farm

Case Reference: PAX16.324387

Dear Sir/Madam,

I wish to make a formal observation regarding the proposed Muingmore Wind Farm development.

I have a very strong personal and family connection to Muingmore and the surrounding area. My family home is in this area, and I also have close relatives living in and connected to Muingmore.

This landscape has been part of my family's life for generations. It is not simply an area that we occasionally visit; it is our HOME, we live here, our family history and an important part of who we are.

My family and I are extremely concerned about the scale of the proposed development and the effect it could have on our lives, our homes and the peaceful rural character of Muingmore.

My main concerns relate to noise pollution, shadow flicker, the destruction of the scenery and views, and the overall effect on the people and families who live in this area.

Noise pollution

One of my greatest concerns is the potential noise from the proposed wind turbines.

Muingmore is currently a quiet rural area. The natural peace and quiet are among the reasons people value living here. Residents are accustomed to the ordinary sounds of the countryside, not the continuing mechanical and repetitive noise that may be produced by large wind turbines. Wind-turbine noise would not be a temporary inconvenience. It could continue throughout the day and night, depending on the wind direction, wind speed, weather conditions and operation of the turbines.

I am particularly concerned about noise during the evening and at night, when background noise in the area is naturally very low. A noise level that may appear acceptable in a calculation could still be extremely noticeable and disturbing in a quiet rural home.

The possible effects on sleep, rest, concentration and general well-being must be taken seriously. People should be able to open their windows, sit outside, enjoy their gardens and sleep peacefully without being disturbed by a commercial development.

I am also concerned that average noise calculations may not reflect what residents would actually experience. The assessment must properly consider changes in wind direction, unusual weather conditions, tonal noise, low-frequency sound and periods when turbine noise may be more noticeable than usual.

It would not be acceptable for residents to have to make repeated complaints after the wind farm became operational. Any potential noise impact should be fully investigated before permission is considered.

There must also be a clear and independent complaints procedure. The developer should not be allowed to investigate and decide on residents' complaints without proper independent monitoring and oversight.

Shadow flicker

I am also extremely concerned about shadow flicker affecting homes in Muingmore and the surrounding area.

Shadow flicker occurs when the rotating blades pass between the sun and a house, causing repeated moving shadows or a flashing effect through windows and across rooms.

This could be very disturbing for the people living in an affected home. It could interfere with ordinary activities such as watching television, reading, working, eating meals or simply sitting in a room.

Children, older people and anyone who is sensitive to flashing or repetitive movement could find the effect particularly upsetting.

A home should be a place where people feel comfortable and safe. Residents should not have to close curtains or blinds to protect themselves from shadow flicker. Closing curtains should never be treated as an acceptable form of mitigation.

People have a right to enjoy natural daylight in their own homes.

I am concerned about any proposal that would rely on residents reporting shadow flicker after it has already occurred. Any control system would need to be automatic and capable of shutting down the relevant turbine before shadow flicker affected a home.

The assessment must consider the actual positions of houses, windows, gardens and outdoor areas. It must also consider the different times of day and seasons of the year.

Computer modelling cannot always reproduce the real experience of living with moving shadows passing through a home. Where there is uncertainty, the protection of residents must come first.

Scenery, views and landscape character

The effect on the scenery and views is another major concern for me and my family.

Muingmore and the surrounding parts of Erris have a beautiful, open and largely unspoilt rural landscape. The bogland, hills, coastline, open skies and long-distance views are all part of what makes this area special.

The proposed turbines would introduce very large industrial structures into this landscape. Their height and movement would make them dominant features that could be seen from homes, local roads and communities throughout the surrounding area.

The movement of the blades would constantly draw the eye. The turbines would not blend into the landscape in the same way as a small or stationary structure.

The landscape is especially important to the people who live here. These are the views we see when we leave our homes in the morning and return in the evening. They are part of our everyday lives and our family memories.

A photomontage or photograph cannot fully represent the real effect of seeing numerous moving turbines across the landscape every day. It cannot recreate the scale of the structures, the movement of the blades, changing weather conditions or the experience of viewing them from a family home.

I am deeply concerned that the rural character of Muingmore would be changed into an industrial energy landscape.

Once this change takes place, it cannot easily be reversed. Even after the turbines are eventually removed, roads, foundations, drainage systems, cables, compounds and other infrastructure may remain.

The fact that a development produces renewable energy does not mean that landscape impacts should be ignored. Renewable-energy projects must still be appropriately located and must respect sensitive landscapes and the people who live within them.

Effect on our family home and relatives

This application is particularly upsetting because of our personal connection to Muingmore.

My family home is part of this area, and I have relatives and family connections in Muingmore. The proposed development would affect a place that has been part of our family's life and history for many years.

The people living in Muingmore are not temporary visitors. They are families who have built their lives here, raised their children here and intend to remain here.

Their homes and quality of life should not be treated as less important simply because this is a rural and sparsely populated area.

Muingmore is not empty land. It is a living community filled with homes, families, memories and strong connections between people and place.

The peace, scenery and sense of home that people enjoy cannot be replaced by financial contributions or community funding.

A person's home is normally their greatest investment, both financially and emotionally. People should not have to fear that the peaceful enjoyment, attractiveness or value of their homes could be damaged by a development over which they have no control.

Combined effect on residents

The impacts of the development must not be examined separately.

A family could experience noise at certain times, shadow flicker at other times and the visual presence of the turbines every day. At night, turbine warning lights and lighting connected with the wider development could create another source of disturbance.

When these effects are combined, the overall impact on a household could be far greater than any single impact considered on its own.

The Commission must consider the cumulative effect on sleep, stress, mental well-being, enjoyment of homes, use of gardens and the general quality of life of residents.

It would be unfair to expect people to change how they live in their homes because of this development. Residents should not have to keep windows closed because of noise, close curtains because of shadow flicker or avoid parts of their gardens because of the turbines.

Construction disturbance

I am also concerned about the disruption that would be caused during the construction phase.

The construction of a development of this scale would involve large machinery, heavy-goods vehicles, abnormal loads, excavation works and significant movements along local roads.

This could cause noise, dust, traffic delays and road-safety concerns for local people. These roads are used daily by residents, school transport, farmers, pedestrians, cyclists and families travelling to work and appointments.

The construction phase may be temporary, but the disruption could continue for a considerable period. The effect on the people who live along the construction and delivery routes must be properly assessed.

Night-time views and lighting

The rural night sky is also an important part of the character of this area.

Lighting on the turbines and within the wider development could be visible from homes and communities over a wide area. Red warning lights on turbines would introduce an industrial feature into views that are currently dark and peaceful.

This impact would not be limited to daytime hours. Residents could experience the visual effects of the development during the day and the lighting effects every night.

The loss of dark, uninterrupted night-time views would represent another permanent change to the character of Muingmore.

Community concerns

There is very real concern within the local community about this proposal.

Residents are not raising these issues because they are opposed to all renewable energy. We understand the importance of renewable energy and addressing climate change.

However, renewable-energy developments must be built in suitable locations and at an appropriate scale. They must not be imposed on communities without properly protecting residents, family homes and sensitive rural landscapes.

The need for renewable energy should not be used to dismiss legitimate concerns about noise, shadow flicker, landscape damage and quality of life.

Conclusion

Muingmore is part of my family's home, history and identity. My family and I are deeply concerned that this development would permanently change the area and damage the peaceful way of life currently enjoyed by residents.

My principal concerns are:

- Noise pollution and possible sleep disturbance.
- Shadow flicker affecting homes and families.

- The destruction of valued scenery and views.
- The visual dominance of large moving turbines.
- The effect on our family home and our relatives in Muingmore.
- The loss of the area's peaceful rural character.
- The combined effect on residents' quality of life.
- Construction traffic, noise and disruption.
- The effect of turbine and compound lighting on the night landscape.
- The cumulative impact of the entire development.

These impacts cannot be adequately compensated for by money or community funding. Once the peace, views and landscape character of Muingmore are lost, they cannot simply be restored.

For all of these reasons, I respectfully request that An Coimisiún Pleanála refuse permission for the proposed Muingmore Wind Farm.

I ask the Commission to give proper weight to the experiences, family connections and genuine concerns of the people who live in Muingmore and the surrounding communities.

Yours faithfully,

Signed:

Sheamus Goonan

26/07/2026